IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday February 21st 2021

IRTS Training Courses

The IRTS Training section has been running two online classes since mid-November and these classes are in their final scheduled week. However, as the scheduled HAREC examination cannot currently be held due to Covid-19 pandemic, revision classes for both groups will continue on Wednesday evenings at 2000 until the date for the examination is finalised. Our sincere thanks to the following tutors who volunteered to run the first two classes, Michael Lee EI4HF, Jim Holohan EI4HH, Stefan Zalewski EI4KU, Keith Crittenden EI5KJ, Jerry Cahill EI6BT, Simon Kenny EI7ALB Larry McGriskin EI9CN and Dave Moore EI4BZ who co-ordinated the whole effort. The classes are held on the Zoom platform and have proved very successful with only a few drop-outs from the forty seven starters. A third class will begin on March 30th and will run twice weekly for eight weeks on Tuesday and Thursday nights leading to an examination in June. Intending participants should be IRTS members or intending members and should contact the IRTS training team by email on training /at/ irts.ie. For anyone interested in studying for the HAREC examination, there is a wealth of information and study guides available on the IRTS website at www.irts.ie

New Additions to the IRTS Publications Library

The IRTS Publications Library at www.irts.ie/library contains newsletters and other IRTS publications up to the year 2000. We have recently added more than 40 newsletters and annual reports to the library - these latest additions are highlighted on the web site. They include a complete set of publications for 1948 and 1949, which provide a good insight into the activities of radio experimenters at a time when they were working mostly with home-built or modified war-surplus equipment. More details of the new additions to the library will be included in the next edition of Echo Ireland, the IRTS Members' Journal.

Request for nominations for IRTS Awards.

The IRTS Awards Committee is seeking nominations for "Awards for Services to the Society or to Amateur Radio" and for "Awards to IRTS Members for other

achievements". The winners in the above categories would normally be presented with their inscribed trophy/shield in person at the AGM. However, due to the Corona-19 virus pandemic the trophies/shields will be inscribed but will not be distributed to the winners except where a winner specifically requests delivery of same. It is important that our fellow experimenters and operators whose work and effort on behalf of each one of us and for the Society be recognised and rewarded. Please send your nominations for specific awards to the Awards Manager to - holohaj2 /at/hotmail.com

IRTS Committee meeting

The next IRTS Committee meeting will take place on Saturday next at 1100 on the Zoom platform. The committee will, as usual, receive reports from the office holders delivering the many services to members. The Spring edition of Echo Ireland will carry the notice of the Annual General Meeting and committee and financial reports and these will be finalized at the meeting. The deadline for receipt of input for the Spring Echo Ireland is March 1st. The Echo Ireland Editor is urgently seeking a new HF correspondent as the current correspondent Don Brennan EI6IL is stepping down from the role. Our thanks to active DXer Don for always producing an informative and educational HF column.

Mayo Lock Down Net

The Mayo VHF Group - Covid Lockdown Net takes place on Wednesday evenings at 2000 on 145.375MHz FM. This Net will run for the duration of the Government Level 5 lock down. So, join in and say hello, all welcome including Shortwave Listener reports.

On the Air next week

The UKEICC monthly one hour 80m CW Contest will be held on Wednesday next the 24th at 2000. EI5G and, for this contest at least, GM7V will be bonus stations. Any valid QSO with these stations will score a flat ten points regardless of distance. This will somewhat counterbalance the distance-related scores enjoyed by stations well away from the EI/G centre of activity and hopefully make it more interesting for modest stations that are based in EI/G and further afield. Joe EI7GY will be operating EI5G for this contest and he will be certainly be running some pileups. The big event for SSB Top Band operators is on next weekend when the CQ Worldwide SSB 160m contest kicks off at 2200 on Friday night and runs until 2200 on Sunday night. North

American stations will give report plus state or province while all others will give report and CQ Zone. The EI single operator high power record holder in this contest is EI7M operated by Dan EI3JZ in 2013 while the low power record is held by Paul EI3ENB since 2012. Gerard EI5KF holds two records, QRP at EI1E and the single high power operator assisted in 2018. The multi op high power record is held by EI7M since 2011. Hopefully, some of these records will be challenged next weekend. Also on next weekend is the French REF SSB contest starting at 0600 on Saturday next and finishing at 1800 on Sunday, while the Belgian UBA CW contest runs from 1300 on Saturday until 1300 on Sunday. Digital mode operators have the 24 hour FT4 contest starting at 1200 on Saturday next and this is run by the European FT8 Club. The exchange is report plus state or province for North American stations while all others will give report and serial number. It is important that participants in this one study the rules which are available on europeanft8club.wordpress.com.

Now some DX news: Tom, NL7RR, is expected to be active starting around February 26th, as KH9/NL7RR from Wake Island (Oceania-053) for about 6 weeks, as time permits. Tom hopes to be on 40 and 20 meters on SSB. The Greek Ministry of Digital Governance are allowing Greek radio amateurs to use the following special prefixes throughout 2021 to celebrate Greece's bicentennial of the 1821 Greek Revolution, where Greek revolutionaries fought against the Ottoman Empire between 1821 and 1830. Greek Radio Amateur Radio with Class 1 licenses (SV) can use SZ200. Those with introductory Level licenses (SY) can use SY200 and club stations can use SZ200. These special prefix stations (along with other special Greek stations) are valid for a special "200 Years of Greek Independence Award" and this is available in four different levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. The award manager is SV2RCK. Complete award details are available at: sv2rck.gr/200YEARS. Mireille, 3A/F4FRL and Patrice, 3A/F5RBB will be active from Monaco between the 24th of February and the 2nd of March. They will operate SSB and digital modes on the 40 to 20m bands. QSL via LOTW and eQSL.

Youth Working group of IARU Region 1

The Youth Working Group within IARU Region 1 have created a new program called "YOTA online". In these monthly gatherings they try to bring the YOTA feeling towards the online community and spread the word that there is youth in ham radio. A YOTA team consisting of active youngsters will present different topics, each month while answering questions from the community. Summits on the Air, Islands On the Air, Worldwide Flora and Fauna and other radio-friendly outdoor activities will be the focus of discussion during the next YOTA Online session at 1900 UTC on Thursday next, the 25th of February. This episode is called "Gone exploring" and shares different ways to enjoy outdoor activations. It will be followed by a question-and-answer period afterwards. The event will be livestreamed on YouTube, Twitch and

Facebook. Search for 'hamyota' on these platforms. IRTS Youth Officer Niall Donoghue EI6HIB is always interested in hearing from anyone interested in promoting amateur radio to our youth and has set up YOTA pages on Facebook and more recently TikTok which is a newly emerging social media platform popular amongst those under the age of 18. Niall can be contacted by email at nialldonohoe15 at hotmail.com.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam/at/irts/dot/ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday. Urgent items for the news may be telephoned to News Editor Dave EI4BZ on 087-6290574.

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